Further, import duty on Semi-milled and wholly milled rice for imports made on or before 31.3.2009 was also reduced from 70% to Nil *w.e.f.* 31.3.2008.

(c) to (e) Containment of inflation remains high on the agenda of the Government. Anti-Inflationary policies of the Government include strict-fiscal discipline, rationalization of duties of essential items, effective supply-demand management of essential commodities through liberal tariff and trade policies, and procurement through public sector agencies. The Monetary policy of Reserve Bank of India, while being conducive to economic growth, has attempted to contain inflationary expectations arising out of uncertainties in domestic and international environment. These measures are expected to moderate inflation and inflationary expectations in coming weeks.

Imposition of Corporate Tax on Big Retail Stores

2981. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that Confederation of All India Traders have urged Government to impose corporate tax on retail stores run by big corporate houses;

if so, the details thereof;

whether the confederation has also requested to constitute an Independent special task force to study the socio-economic environment and cultural Impact of corporate retails; and

if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. *Vide* letter dated 9.3.2008, the Confederation has suggested that corporate tax should be imposed on retail stores run by big corporate houses. Since no specific exemption is available to such retail stores, they are liable to income-tax on their taxable income.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. However, it is not considered necessary to set-up a task force to study the socio-economic environment and cultural impact of corporate retails.

Functioning of Money Lenders Across States

2982. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

whether Government is aware of functioning of money lenders **in** many States who are lending money on various interest rates to farmers;

if so, the details thereof including number of such money lenders, amount of money given to farmers on interest and the interest rate in various States, State-wise, category-wise, year-wise for last three years;

whether any study has been initiated to examine enormity of the problem of usrious interest rates and grip of money lenders over farmers in various States;

if so, the details thereof; and

if not, what steps would be taken for it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) As per National Sample Survey Organisation data on 'Indebtedness of Farmer Households' (2003), 51.4% of fanner households do not access